

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE.

L. ROSEWATER, Editor. PUBLISHED EVERY MORNING.

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STATEMENT OF CIRCULATION. State of Nebraska, Douglas County, ss.: I, George H. Tschuck, secretary of The Bee Publishing Company, being duly sworn, certify that the actual number of full and complete copies of the Daily Morning, Evening and Sunday Bee, printed during the month of December, 1899, was as follows:

Table with 2 columns: Number of copies and Total. Rows include 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, Total, Less unsold and returned copies, Net total sales, Net daily average.

The weather man is not under the suspicion of being subsidized by the coal barons. The arrival of the man of destiny has caused a sudden drop of 16 to 1 degrees in the temperature.

Senatorial contests disposed of with neatness and dispatch is the sign which the Iowa legislature hangs out.

How many birthdays did General Jackson have and how many anniversaries of the battle of New Orleans do we have to celebrate?

A Kentucky court which was hearing a murder case adjourned to witness a fight in which two other men were killed. At that rate the court can never catch up with its business.

Again The Bee has scored a notable news beat on all its alleged rivals in the story of the unraveled murder mystery at Kearney. The Bee's readers always get the best and get it first.

Senator Gear will read a title clear to another six years' term as soon as the Iowa legislators can go through the legal formalities of registering their votes for him and certifying to his commission.

The ex-Gov. Mr. Brown, who played traitor to Lieutenant Gilmore's command of prisoners while in the hands of the Filipinos, will probably take up his permanent abode with the sultan of Sulu.

The voting machine is said to be a handicap to the ignorant voter. Wonder if that is the reason the democratic organ is having such tantrums over its prospective adoption for the coming municipal election.

Scarcely a week passes without an announcement of some new business enterprise establishing itself in Omaha. As an attractive field for capital investments Omaha is not to be excelled by any of its competitors.

The English generals in Africa have telegraphed the American commanders in the Philippines for the recipe for making their opponents run. General Otis has offered to trade it for the English method of inducing them to stop and fight.

Numerous democrats have denied that an effort is being made to displace the present leadership of the party and place it in the hands of ex-Senator Gorman. But it is noticeable the Maryland ex-senator and his close friends are not among those who make the denial.

Every department of the city is sure that it needs greater appropriations for maintenance the coming year than it had the last year. It will devote upon the council to persuade most of them that their estimates can be considerably contracted by wringing out the water in them.

Our amiable popocratic contemporary, which is so anxious to have the Stocomb law enforced in all its drastic provisions, is reminded of the fact that the county attorney is a popocratic official, who is doubtless ready to carry out any orders that do not interfere with the revenue of the gang.

Boss Tweed once inquired, "What are you going to do about it?" when taken to task for misappropriating public funds. Boss Tweed was landed in prison in spite of his defiance. The ex-county official who sent a deft to the county commissioners should have his challenge as promptly accepted.

Senator Pettigrew is wearing away his life sitting up nights writing resolutions to introduce in the senate. The production of one each day must be a severe tax upon his resources and if congress does not wish to see him prostrated from overwork it should take a short vacation to give him a rest.

NO SUBORDINATION OF SILVER.

While there are democrats in every section of the country who desire that silver shall be subordinated if not ignored in this year's campaign, it will not make an impression upon the leader of the party. Recently the chairman of the New York democratic state committee, having made a trip through the south with a view to ascertaining the sentiment there, stated that none of the leaders whom he met was disposed to insist upon making free silver the main issue of this year's campaign. They were not willing to abandon the Chicago platform, but they thought the silver question should be subordinated to the newer issues. There are democrats in other sections who take this view and a few who urge that it would be well for the party to drop the silver issue altogether. It is noteworthy that this question received no attention from the speakers at the banquet of the Chicago Jackson club, with the exception of the chief guest.

Mr. Bryan, however, will tolerate no subordination of silver. His declared platform is, silver, anti-trust and anti-imperialism—and the greatest of these is silver. In his Chicago address Mr. Bryan declared that the demand for the free coinage of silver had been vindicated by the experience since 1896, for had not the increase in the supply of gold and the resulting better prices for commodities demonstrated the soundness of the quantitative theory of money? "The fight for bimetalism at the rate of 16 to 1 has not been lost," said Mr. Bryan. "The increased production of gold has shown the advantage of more money and has answered the argument so often made that the parity could not be maintained because of the overproduction of silver." The meaning of the last part of the sentence is not clear, but that is not important. It is sufficient that it serves notice upon Mr. Bryan's adherents that no heed will be given to those who favor placing silver in a subordinate place among the issues of the national campaign of 1900. Whatever others may think as to the policy or expediency of keeping that question at the front, Mr. Bryan believes that it should continue to occupy that place and what he believes "goes."

The "bimetalism" for which Mr. Bryan stands was badly beaten in 1896 and again suffered defeat wherever it was an issue in 1898. It has unquestionably lost ground everywhere. States that he carried in 1896 he could not carry on this issue. Every state that went republican in that year is practically certain to render a verdict against free silver next November.

These considerations, however, have no weight with Mr. Bryan, and why? Because adherence to free silver is absolutely necessary to his retention of political leadership. Whenever that question is abandoned by his party his domination will end. It is this question that gave him ascendancy and has kept him at the head of the party. It is his political capital and the moment it is dropped he will fall back into the ranks or take a subordinate place among the leaders. No one understands this better than Mr. Bryan himself. He knows that as an anti-trust and anti-imperialism champion he is seriously handicapped. During his two terms in congress he never uttered a word against trusts. When the treaty of peace with Spain was before the senate he advised his political friends to vote for its ratification. He is striving to make political capital out of these questions, but he realizes that without the silver issue his party leadership would be lost and he therefore insists upon keeping that issue prominent. That he will compel the national convention to do as he will is not doubted.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION.

There is nothing encouraging to the British in the South African situation. It seems evident that the Boers have determined upon more aggressive tactics and if this shall prove to be the case a terrific battle or series of battles may be expected at any time on the Tugela river and about Ladysmith. According to the latest reports that place is very likely to be captured, but this will not be accomplished without tremendous fighting, for the British garrison is composed of veteran soldiers and General White is a brave and able commander. It is probable that the army besieging Ladysmith has been materially reinforced, while it appears to be abundantly supplied with artillery.

If the Boers are able to prevent Buller from crossing the Tugela river without withdrawing forces from Ladysmith, that place must fall and its capture would be a tremendous blow to the British. It would very much strengthen the Boer position and add greatly to the difficulties of the British, to say nothing of the loss of prestige which the latter would suffer. General Buller, in command of an army very much larger than the Boer forces confronting him, appears to be unable to strike an effective blow and it is not surprising that he should be the subject of some sharp criticisms in the English press and that doubt is expressed whether he is qualified for the great task committed to him. It is certain that thus far he has done nothing to justify great confidence in his ability. But as to that no British officer in South Africa has distinguished himself for generalship, with the possible exception of General White, the commander at Ladysmith. There is no question in regard to their bravery, but as strategists or tacticians they have shown no great skill, being in this respect conspicuously inferior to the Boer commanders. Even if it was admitted that they were somewhat at a disadvantage at the beginning of hostilities, it is still a fact that they have not fully improved their opportunities. This has been clearly pointed out by some of the military experts of the London newspapers. The fact is that the British military establishment had greatly degenerated. The statements of the country have been chiefly concerned in maintaining the navy and the army has been neglected. The consequence is that in a war requiring a high order of generalship Great Britain is without a soldier of

first-rate knowledge of the art of war. Her generals have had much experience in India and in fighting natives in Africa, but they now have to deal with a civilized white foe, as intrepid and determined as any people in the world and who are demonstrating an astonishing familiarity with the art of war. The Boer tactics may not have been faultless, but they have certainly shown a skill and sagacity that were not expected of them, particularly by the British.

The situation appears to fully justify the apprehension that is said to prevail in England. A great and possibly decisive battle is imminent in which there will be great loss of life on both sides, whatever the result. Should the British suffer another reverse it may increase the gravity of the situation for them by causing fresh accessions to the Boer ranks. Should the Boers be defeated they would perhaps retreat to the Transvaal and await the British invasion, which it is believed they can successfully resist for an indefinite time.

ABOLISH THE FEE SYSTEM.

The experience Douglas county has had with fee officers during the past ten years emphasizes the imperative need for the abolition of the entire fee system. Every dollar collected in fees for whatever service should be turned into the treasury and every public officer from constable to sheriff and clerk of the court should receive an income fixed by law. There should be no grab-bag or chance in the compensation of public servants. The fee system is in the nature of things an incentive to dishonesty and a source of corruption. It impels public officers to charge exorbitant mileage while traveling on railroad passes and is a premium on perjury and padded vouchers. When a candidate for office knows exactly how much he will get for his service he will have no ground for complaining about being underpaid and overworked.

The fee system is chargeable with sham oil inspection and sham meat inspection. It is also chargeable with the wholesale arrest of Indians as witnesses against bootleggers and the recent upheaval among United States deputy marshals. It is responsible for a system of transporting prisoners, imbeciles and insane persons in single file from county seats to the state penal institutions, reformatories and asylums which they could be bunched together and conveyed in charge of deputy sheriffs in one trip. But so long as deputies can draw to cents a mile for each prisoner, trunk or lunatic they are not likely to miss the opportunity to make a fat piece out of the state, which in the end means out of the individual taxpayer.

It is the temptation of the fee system that makes one class of officials dishonest and extravagant and the other class weak at imposition and fraud. The only remedy is an enlightened public sentiment that will demand the abolition of all fees as perquisites of office and the fixing of salaries for every public officer who is now dependent for his income on the volume of fees and extent of mileage.

The interest of the taxpayers in the police court is brought home by the statement that only \$261 were collected from police court fines during the past year for the benefit of the school fund. Instead of being a source of income the police court, as now conducted, is a positive burden. It is worth while for the school board to look into the situation with a view to revising the methods now employed.

The present is an age noted for the utilization of all manner of forces to meet the needs of man. None have been developed to greater perfection than the injunction, but it remained for an Iowa man to go the limit by securing a writ to prevent the marriage of his daughter. As love laughs at locksmiths, Cupid will doubtless be able to break jail if sent up for contempt.

The interest of American prisoners by the Filipinos will have a tendency to make thinking opponents of the administration adjust their spectacles and wonder if their optics have not been playing them false on the Philippine question. Barbarous acts are not the work of a people intent on self-government of an enlightened character such as modern civilization demands.

The civil service rules under which competent and faithful school teachers enjoy protection against annual hiccups and summary removals for frivolous cause should not be disturbed. Any attempt to abolish the permanent tenure rule will justly arouse public resentment and stir up a hornet's nest over the heads of the school board.

Some of the Omaha populists wait to know whether they will be allowed to make suggestions as to the makeup of the popocratic city ticket. That depends upon the suggestions. If they are modest enough to concede to the democrats the whole piece of pie they can suggest all they want.

Coming Our Way.

San Francisco Call. For a government which is new in world-wide diplomacy it is certainly a triumph for the United States to obtain the open door in China after Great Britain had failed.

Time's Evolution.

Globe-Democrat. A steamship loaded with American coal is on its way to the birthplace of Columbus. The Genesee little thought in the time of their famous navigator that some day they would be sending across the Atlantic for fuel.

Machones Come to the Mountain.

The United States, having demonstrated its right to the title, "First in war," is about to be conceded "First in peace." Most of the nations on earth are clamoring for American intervention in the war in South Africa.

Boerism in Some Things.

Starbuck Republican. Anglo-American civilization is obstinately old fogey in some matters. France has adopted in all official departments the system of the 24 o'clock day, following the example of Belgium and the railroads of sev-

RUBBING DOWN THE SCRAPPIERS.

New York World. The Canadians in South Africa behaved very like Americans.

Philadelphia Times. England fears if food for the Boer tables is declared contraband, in time the tables may be turned on itself.

Washington Post. England is not paying much attention to China. John Bull's time is fully occupied with the open Boer in the Transvaal.

San Francisco Call. It looks as if Buller had decided not to make any further advance in the war until he has made up his mind whether he is fighting in the nineteenth or the twentieth century.

Globe-Democrat. A humorous report comes to the effect that England will send President Kruger to the island of St. Helena. The first trouble will be to get him, and it is certain he will never follow Napoleon's example of voluntary surrender.

Indianapolis News. Man to man, the British are no better than the Boers, and with the Boers entrenched as they are, on their native heath, knowing, with the unerring instinct of Indians or frontiersmen, to take advantage of every feature of the ground, something that the British do not know, man for man, they cannot be defeated, although they are not so good marksmen as they were supposed to be. They are strong, sturdy men and can shoot straight. But they cannot do the fine individual shooting of the good marksmen of the Boer army.

CONTRABAND OF WAR.

Baltimore American. The United States has notified Great Britain that seizures of American vessels will not be tolerated as a matter of British right. This sounds like an echo from out of the dim pasts of his-

A NEBRASKA SAMPLE.

Buffalo Express. Another strong point scored by German newspapers in discussing the seizures in Delagoa bay is that in 1870 English firms made considerable money by selling not only food and ordinary merchandise, but even arms to the French.

St. Louis Globe-Democrat. It ought to be the repeated seizure of German vessels in South African waters is bad policy. A German historian in an article in one of the American magazines recently said there was only one man in Germany who did not hate England and that was the Kaiser. The story now is that the Kaiser himself is beginning to get angry at England. This may or may not be true, but the folly of England's course is pretty apparent to most persons by this time.

Kansas City Star. Speaking of seizures on the high seas, probably the most high-handed affair since the British frigate Leopard searched the United States frigate Chesapeake for British deserters was the taking of the Confederate commissioner's United States steamer Trent by the British in 1862.

DEBT-PAYING POSSIBILITIES OF AN AVERAGE HARVEST.

American Farmer. A few years ago hard times made the western farmer deny himself everything save the barest necessities of life. Then came the great crop year of 1897 and with it a story.

A Nebraska farmer carried a mortgage of \$4,200 on his property, and it was burden hard to contend with. The wheat crop of '97 was enormous and prices were high. He appeared at the bank shortly after harvest, pulled out \$4,000 and asked for a loan of \$200 to enable him to cancel the mortgage note. The banker, who held the note, urged him not to bother about it, but go and buy cattle with his \$4,000, feed his corn crop and in that way get the maximum for his product. "No, sir," replied the farmer, "I am not going to do that now. Then when I harvest the corn I'm going to pay you back that \$200 I just borrowed, and then do you know what I'm going to do?" and his honest face beamed all over with pleasure. "I'm going to buy a new suit of clothes."

When the farmer's small property, in thousands of others out in Nebraska, and the fact that during the past six months one concern has shipped to one firm in Omaha alone 139 carloads of buggies and carriages, averaging about twenty-two to the car, it is very plain that the property, in connection with Nebraska, is a wonderful state with great resources, and the crops of the past few years have put Nebraska farmers in an enviable position.

LAST YEAR'S RECORD PROVES SIGNIFICANT CONTRAST.

Philadelphia Times. Indications of business prosperity are of two kinds—positive and negative. The first relate to the volume of business actually transacted, including business failures, suspensions, extensions, compromises with creditors, etc. In dull or disastrous business seasons the number of such reports separate failures is invariably a long one, and in prosperous years it is quite as invariably lessened.

The list of mercantile failures for 1899 has been shown to be in line with this indication. The most striking feature of the year's bankruptcies, however, related to the railway receiverships, which numbered but ten, comprising but 1,619 miles of railway all told, being but one-half of 1 per cent of the total mileage of the country. But one road of importance, the Kansas City, Pittsburg & Gulf, was included in the list, two of the others being short logging roads, one an old narrow-gauge railway, and the others merely local lines.

When this record is compared with that of 1900, which the receiverships included 47,000 miles of railway, with nearly 20,000 companies, the contrast is very marked, and indicates that railway construction is either getting on a sounder business basis than ever before, or that business was so good that there was no sort of a railway could meet its obligations.

STATE ELECTIONS OF 1899.

Figures that indicate the drift of the Philadelphia Press. Eleven states held elections in 1899 in which general tickets were voted for and in three other states there were elections for legislatures or important county officers.

In the latter states the vote has not been completed, but in which there was given, but in the eleven states the official vote cast by the different parties has been declared. It is as follows:

Table with 4 columns: State, Rep., Dem., Pro. Pop. Rows include Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota.

Totals: 1,733,191 1,552,434 62,738 32,168. The result shows that the eleven states the republicans carried eight and the democrats three. The total republican vote was 1,933,191 and the total democratic vote 1,652,434, leaving a republican plurality of 280,757. The aggregate prohibition and some states and territories not given, impossible to classify, and therefore not given in the table, sum up about 230,000, leaving a clear republican majority of 50,000. This is an excellent showing in a year when there was very little political interest outside of two or three states. The three states holding elections, but in which there was no general ticket, were Kansas, New York and Virginia. The republican plurality in the first state is estimated at 20,000 and in the second state at 33,000, a total of 53,000, and the democratic majority in the third state is placed between 50,000 and 55,000. So they just about balance each other.

The elections in the year preceding the presidential election year are closely looked to for indications of the drift of public sentiment. If there is opposition to the party in power which is likely to become formidable in the next election, it is not only the country is satisfied with the administration, a vote of confidence will be given. It is in the latter light that the elections of last year will be interpreted.

A DROPPED-DAY YEAR.

Whether or not it is due to the fact that women miss the privilege of turning leap year, it is certain that much anxious inquiry has arisen as to why the year 1900, although it is the fourth year, is not a leap year. It is not, that is certain. February, 1900, has only twenty-eight days.

It is fortunate that in this way attention is sometimes directed toward the calendar, as perfect a little device as any which man has ever fitted himself into the unaccommodating phenomena of the solar system. The year 1900 is a "dropped-day year." No person living now will ever see another. The year 2100 is the next "dropped-day year." The trouble comes about in this way:

One day of twenty-four hours is the time required for the earth to make one rotation on its axis, producing the change of day and night. One lunar month is the time required for the moon to revolve once around the earth. One year is the time required for the earth to revolve once around the sun, producing the changes of the seasons.

For these different periods of time there is no "common divisor," that is, the day is not contained an even number of times in the month or the month an even number of times in the year. For instance, the month contains exactly 29,530,884 days, and the year contains exactly 365 days, 5 hours, 48 1/2 minutes. That makes all the trouble.

The Mohammedans, in making up their calendar, disregarded the year entirely and base their reckoning on the month. Under this plan the Mohammedans have the blithe-some spring sometimes in January and sometimes in August.

Christians disregard the month entirely, using an arbitrary division which they call a month, which has no connection with the month, and use the year as the basis of their calendar. This makes the seasons always fall at the same time.

Now, the true year contains 365 1/4 days, 5 hours, 48 1/2 minutes. The odd number cannot well be formed directly into a calendar year, which must contain only complete days. Pope Gregory XIII., who in 1582 improved the calendar invented by the astronomer Julius Caesar, made a rule which has been adopted by all countries except Russia, that "the closing year of each century, 1600, 1700, etc., instead of being always a leap year, as in the Julian calendar, should be a leap year only when divisible by 400."

Now, the true year contains 365 1/4 days, 5 hours, 48 1/2 minutes long. The ordinary calendar year is 365 days long. This leap year is 268 1/2 days longer. This average year is 365 1/4 days long. In this way the calendar gains on the sun 1 1/4 minutes each year. In 100 years the gain is 1.125 minutes or 13 1/2 hours, almost a day. Dropping the leap-year day, therefore, once every 100 years balances up the 13 1/2 hours and almost a day.

In 400 years the sun will be almost a full day (four times 5 1/4 hours) ahead of the calendar. Making every 400th year a leap year brings about almost absolute coincidence.

CUT DOWN THE WAR TAXES.

Best and Most Feasible Plan of Pro-venting a Recession. Louisville Courier-Journal (dem.) The republican party, if it expects to remain in power, had better speedily set to work some reform in revenue legislation. The way money is piling into the treasury in excess of the government's requirements threatens continued danger to business, besides being a constant temptation to extravagance.

A few figures will show this. The ordinary receipts and expenditures of December left a surplus of \$7,703,604, besides which the anticipation of the January interest, and the items of interest due in December absorbed \$4,346,000 more, making the real surplus for the month over \$12,000,000. November's surplus was \$6,175,724 and October's was \$3,239,561. Here is an actual excess of \$17,238,889 of receipts over expenditures in cash for the last quarter of the year, and if the interest payments of January had not been anticipated it would have been \$21,500,000, which is at the rate of \$86,000,000 per annum. January promises another large surplus, and by the close of August the excess of receipts over expenditures, it is officially estimated, will amount to \$60,000,000 and it will go to \$100,000,000 by the close of 1900.

With the vast increase in business activity which is calling for the use of every dollar of our currency it is manifest that this enormous surplus cannot be spared from the general circulation. The treasury already has a net cash balance of \$282,000,000, and there would be no reason in permitting it to reach \$400,000,000. The only way to obviate it as the law now stands is for the secretary either to buy bonds or to increase the deposit in the national bank.

With the presidential campaign going on it is reasonable to suppose that the administration will not subject itself to any more charges of favoritism to the national banks. Money is so valuable now that the privilege would be worth a great deal to the banks, and would embitter the already great prejudice against them. And to buy bonds at the exorbitant prices now asked would hardly be good financing or good politics. The more feasible plan would be to reduce the revenues. What is the use of taking money in the pocket when it is not needed? The abolition or reduction of some of the war taxes would be an easy solution of the question, if the sacred structure of the Dingley tariff cannot be meddled with. The fact that it is necessary to go carefully because there is no clear idea as to expenditures in our dependencies may be alleged as an excuse not to touch the tariff, but the war taxes should be cut down in some way.

PERSONAL AND OTHERWISE.

Captain Leary of Guam is monarch of all he surveys. Sigmar Mohring, editor of a Berlin comic paper, has been sent to prison for six months for making fun of the Catholic church. This is no joke.

A gifted Boston scientist has constructed a diagram to prove that the twentieth century will begin next year, and now Boston no longer doubts that the century will begin next year.

Senator Hale, with his own wealth and that which was added by his marriage with a daughter of the late Senator Chandler of Michigan, is a multi-millionaire.

It is related of a popular lecturer now touring a portion of the country that his tickets of admission read: "Lecture by Dr. Hensons of Chicago on 'Grumbler's.' Admit one."

Captain Sigbee, the hero of the Maine, and who will take charge of the naval intelligence bureau on February 1, has purchased a house in Washington which will be occupied by the Sigbee family.

The first official act of Mayor Hart of Boston on taking office on Monday last, was the appointment of Patrick A. Collins, whom he defeated at the recent election, to be a member of the special commission for the revision of city ordinances. Mr. Collins was formerly a member of this commission, but resigned in September last, when it was decided that he was to be a candidate for the mayoralty.

NO PERSON LIVING NOW WILL EVER SEE ANOTHER LIKE IT.

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OUR NEW TERRITORIES.

Their Government a Serious Problem for Congress to Grapple With. Baltimore American. One of the most perplexing matters which congress will have to deal with in the re-arrangement of the new territories. This perplexity does not arise from any inherent difficulty, but from the eagerness to give some of these territories a complex form of government, totally unlike to existing conditions. The people of Puerto Rico, for instance, are quite as capable of sustaining the ordinary territorial form of government as any of the southwest territories were twenty years ago, but an effort will be made to give them a government which is absolutely unique in our political history. The effect of such a government would be to convert a people who are more than fifty years old into bitter enemies with a serious grievance.

If they are not yet fitted for the regular territorial form of government, why not let them remain as they are? They appear to be thoroughly satisfied with the situation in it and they will not be gratified by any change in the present rule which would be very galling in a government prescribed by congress, in which they were treated as grown-up children. To establish a complex territorial rule in the island, in which all authority and all power and all emolument went to foreigners, while the natives were allowed to play at government, would be a blunder that would long continue to plague the inventor. If they are not fit for self-government, let their government be as simple as that of a common